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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 32 | Min 18 | Humidity 35% Mostly Sunny Sensex 74,332 | Nifty 22,552 | Gold 85,820 | Silver 97,280 | Dollar 87.15 | Euro 94.29 | GBP 112.61

LOSING BET

Techie goes to cops after losing Rs 90 lakh to gambling games site in order to urge authorities to take site down

PAGE 3

WHAT A DUMP

With Vengaiah Lake fenced off, some builders making workers sneakily dump debris on side of the road on NH-75 at night

PAGE 5

Academic future of 4.90 lakh students from backward, minority and scheduled communities in limbo as scholarship disbursement has been indefinitely delayed

THE GRANT ILLUSION

Failure to release funds in time, Aadhaar linking and other discrepancies said to be reasons

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The delay in disbursing student scholarships for the past four years has jeopardised the academic future of nearly 4.90 lakh students from backward, minority, and scheduled communities in Karnataka. Many students, relying on these scholarships, have taken loans to continue their higher education. Some have resorted to part-time jobs to pay their tuition fees. What is more, thousands of students, who have already completed their courses, are yet to receive the scholarship funds in their bank accounts.

What caused the delay?

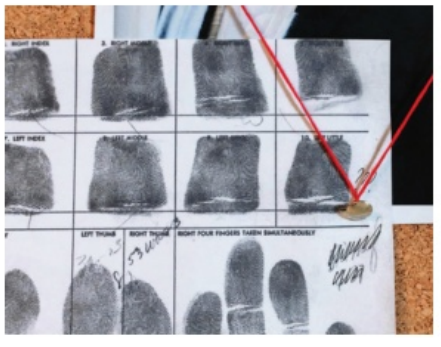
An official said, "The covid-19 pandemic disrupted academic schedules for several courses, except medical education, which continued as usual. Due to these disruptions, scholarship disbursement for affected courses was temporarily halted. However, inexplicably,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> "The delay in scholarship payments is making it difficult for students to continue their studies. If the government does not act soon, we will launch state-wide protests
>
> — Ramanna P, student leader

Trust deficit

20% rise in theft involving house helps as compared to previous years



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With the city recording a 20% rise in thefts involving domestic helps as compared to previous years, police officials are urging stricter verification and background checks.

According to official data, in 2023, 320 cases of thefts by help were reported, out of which 174 were detected. In 2024, the number rose to 383, with only 145 cases detected. The trend seems to be continuing in 2025, with January recording 47 cases.

Police officials state that most of these thefts occur in affluent neighborhoods, where domestic help have access to valuables. In some cases, the culprits have vanished overnight after stealing cash, jewellery, and electronic items. In some cases, police have claimed that domestic help provided crucial information to thieves.

A senior officer from the Police Department said, "We have noticed an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Art show

Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) is presenting 'We don't end at our edges', an immersive exhibition featuring artworks by Bengaluru-based artist, writer, and educator Ravikumar Kashi. **Where: Museum of Art & Photography, Infosys Foundation Gallery, Ground floor; When: Open since March 8**

02 Apparel exhibition

National Silk Expo, an exhibition cum sale of Indian handlooms, is being organised with a wide range of handmade silk and cotton garments, designer ethnic wear, dress materials, home linen, fashion jewellery and much more. **Where: Sindhur Convention Center, JP Nagar; When: March 8 to March 16, 11 am to 9 pm**

03 Artistic expression

Little Boto Project is organising their Art Jamming Event, designed for everyone to relax, explore, and express themselves through art. The participants can choose from three exclusive themes, experiment with watercolors, pencils, and crayons. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: March 16, 5:45 pm**

04 Theatre magic

AGP World is bringing 'Barff (Snow)', a Hindi play written and directed by actor Saurabh Shukla. The play transports viewers to the backdrop of Kashmir during winter, where the lives of three individuals become entangled in a web of unsettling questions. It delves into the heart of human perception, where the lines between truth and belief blur. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: April 6, 7:30 pm**

05 Punch perfect

NY Knockout Academy is organising a boxing workshop with beginner-friendly classes, which will consist of striking, grappling, and self-defence techniques under the guidance of experienced instructors in a safe, supportive environment. The classes include cardio and strength workouts designed to challenge your body and mind. No prior experience is needed. **Where: NY Knockout Academy, Bilekahalli; When: March 10 to March 31**

Sip, savour, and celebrate Vijaya Karnataka and Bangalore Mirror honoured achievers in the hotel and hospitality industry with the prestigious VK & BM Food and NightLife Awards 2024-25. Popular food vlogger Kripal Amanna, actress Ankita Amar, BM and VK CEO Deepak Saluja, and VK Editor Sudarshan Channangihalli presented the awards

Admissions in knots

With private schools already conducting admissions, several parents have raised complaints that school managements are rejecting applications, citing govt guidelines

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Even before the new academic year has begun, private educational institutions have started their admission processes. However, unlike last year, school admissions are not as straightforward, leading to widespread confusion and concerns over the age limit criteria across the state. In response, the Education Department is planning to collect student data to address the issue.

According to a 2022 government order, children must have completed six years of age by June 1 to be eligible for admission to Class 1. Children who fall short of this age requirement by just a day or two are also being denied admission, leaving parents in distress as their child may have to wait an entire year for enrollment. With private schools already conducting admissions, several parents have raised complaints that school managements are rejecting applications, citing government guidelines. Acknowledging the growing number of complaints, a senior education department official emphasised that the department will collect data on affected students and submit a report to the government. B Mahesh, the head of an educational institution, noted that a similar situation arose last year, prompting the government to relax the age limit requirement, allowing many students to secure admissions.

Children who fall short of age requirement by just a day or two are also being denied admission, leaving parents in distress

> **"Students who do not meet the age criteria by a few days or months are being pushed into the admission process**
> – D Shashi Kumar, general secretary of KAMS

Issue may persist until June

The issue is primarily affecting private schools, as they begin their admission process as early as December. According to education experts, government schools, which start admissions in June, might face similar challenges in the coming months. Education expert Kavya D highlighted that the CBSE board has also adopted the age requirement for Class 1 admissions, aligning with Karnataka's educational guidelines. "However, neighbouring states follow different criteria. In Kerala, children can enroll in state board and CBSE schools at 5.0 years, while in Tamil Nadu, the state board allows admissions at 5.6 years, and CBSE schools maintain a requirement of 6 years," she explained.

In conversation with BM, D Shashi Kumar, general secretary, Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools (KAMS), said that even though the state government has already provided necessary relaxations for students admitted during the past two years to avoid disruptions, a recurring issue has emerged. "Each year, a small section of students who do not meet the age criteria by a few days or months are being pushed into the admission process through undue influence," he said. He stated that some organisations are reportedly pressuring authorities to enroll underage students by circumventing regulations. The problem is particularly evident in unauthorised pre-primary schools operating without registration from the Education Department, he noted. "Some private institutions, despite being aware of the official rules, allegedly mislead parents into enrolling children who do not meet the age requirement, thereby violating regulations. Alarmingly, reports indicate that certain parents and schools are now resorting to forging birth certificates to facilitate admissions," he said. He opined that parents who have already spent hefty amounts on pre-primary education are finding themselves in a dilemma, as some schools suggest they continue in the same grade with a fee concession, or obtain fake documents to manipulate the admission process. "Hence, we urge the Education Department to issue strict directives preventing schools from encouraging parents to create forged documents," he said.

Manipal Hospital hosts first-ever Renal Conclave

On the occasion of World Kidney Day, Manipal Hospital, in association with Vijay Karnataka, hosted a Renal Conclave event on March 9. The event themed 'Are your Kidneys okay?' aimed to raise awareness about kidney health, particularly among high risk individuals, and promote early intervention and prevention of kidney diseases.

The conclave brought together a panel of more than 20 experts, including nephrologists and transplant physicians, to educate the public and physicians on the importance of kidney health. The event was inaugurated by Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and actress Milana Nagaraj, along with dignitaries from Manipal Hospital and Vijay Karnataka.

Addressing the gathering Chairman Dr H Sudarshan Ballal said that our kidneys work tirelessly, eliminating waste, regulating blood pressure and haemoglobin. "Appreciate their hard work by making lifestyle modifications- reduce sugar, avoid processed foods, junk, and unnecessary medications. Keep your weight in check, as it's essential for overall health. Don't forget to monitor your kidney health with a simple blood test that costs less than a cup of coffee at a five-star hotel," he said. **— BMB**

K'taka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and actress Milana Nagaraj inaugurating the conclave with other dignitaries

LOSING GAME

Techie receives ₹90-lakh blow

Despite occasional small winnings, he continued to suffer major losses. Desperate to recover his losses, he took a personal loan of Rs 35 lakh and Rs 5 lakh from a finance company and from a private bank, further investing in the platform. By March 6, he had lost a total of Rs 90 lakh

A 32-year-old software engineer working in a private company has filed a police complaint under the CEN police station (East division) on Friday after losing a staggering Rs 90 lakh in an online betting scam linked to a platform called 'Namma Exchange'.

The complainant stated that he was introduced to the platform by a friend from hometown in June 2023, who claimed that it offered lucrative returns through online gambling.

According to the complaint, Pavan (name changed) accessed the website nammaexchange.com, where he created a user ID and password. The platform featured various online betting options, including cricket, football, casino games, and Teen Patti. To participate, users were required to transfer money to bank accounts provided by the platform, which would then reflect as wallet balance for betting.

Initially, Pavan transferred Rs 10,000 from his Citi Bank account and won Rs 40,000 while playing casino games. Encouraged by his early success, he continued betting, increasing his investments. However, he soon started facing losses. Determined to recover his money, he kept recharging his wallet and over a period of months, transferred his entire savings of Rs 50 lakh from his Citi and SBI bank accounts.

Despite occasional small winnings, he continued to suffer major losses. Desperate to recover his losses, he took a personal loan of Rs 35 lakh and Rs 5 lakh from a finance company and from a private bank, further investing in the platform. By March 6, he had lost a total of Rs 90 lakh.

In the complaint, Pavan says that during his research, he discovered that 'Namma Exchange' was not registered in India, nor was it available on Google Play Store or Apple Store. He also noticed that deposits were being made to individual accounts instead of a registered payment gateway, and winnings were credited from personal accounts with no tax deductions.

Additionally, the customer support number listed on the website had a +44-country code, indicating its links to the United Kingdom.

Realising he had fallen victim to a scam, he approached the police, seeking action against the platform operators and hoping to recover his lost money.

He also warned that several others could be lured into similar fraudulent schemes if the website remains active. The police have registered an FIR and further investigations are underway.

Man goes to cops against fraudulent platform hosting various online betting options

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Land allotment to Ranya Rao's firm sparks row

The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) allotted 12 acres of government land to Xiroda India Private Limited, a company linked to Kannada actress Ranya Rao, who is under investigation for alleged gold smuggling. KIADB CEO Dr Mahesh clarified on Sunday that the allotment was approved in the 137th State Level Single Window Clearance Committee (SLSWCC) meeting on January 2, 2023, under the previous government's tenure.

The company, where Ranya Rao serves as a director, had proposed setting up a steel-based TMT strip, rod, and co-products manufacturing unit with an investment of Rs 138 crore, expected to generate 160 jobs. **BMB**

5 arrested for rowdy-sheeter's murder in bar

The Soladevanahalli police have arrested five individuals in connection with the brutal murder of rowdy-sheeter Jayaram at a bar on Hesaraghatta Main Road on March 4. The accused, armed with lethal weapons, ambushed and killed him before fleeing the scene.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Muniraju alias Muni, Rajesh alias Babli, Uday, Yatish Gowda, and Vinay alias Gudde, all residents of Yelahanka New Town. Jayaram, the victim, had a history of criminal activities and was a known rowdy-sheeter under Yelahanka New Town police limits.

According to police investigations, the murder was a planned act of revenge. Muniraju, the prime accused, was an associate of Kiran, who was allegedly murdered by Jayaram in 2018. Jayaram had served jail time in connection with that case and later started a plumbing business in Chikkabommasandra. **BMB**

'Can't invoke arbitration clause for matters already adjudicated'

The High Court has ruled that the Arbitration clause in lease agreements cannot be invoked for matters previously adjudicated and concluded by both the Arbitral Tribunal and competent courts.

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum delivered this judgement whilst dismissing a petition by Starlog Enterprises Limited, which sought appointment of a sole arbitrator for disputes with New Mangalore Port Trust.

The court stated, "Given that both critical issues, the legality of the contract's termination and the refund of amounts claimed have attained finality through due legal process, the petitioner cannot invoke the arbitration clause again on the same grounds. The petitioner's attempt to initiate fresh arbitration proceedings under Section 21 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act is therefore fundamentally misconceived and legally impermissible."

After the port trust cancelled the lease deed, the petitioner sought appointment of a sole arbitrator through the High Court, which was granted. On February 8, 2017, the Arbitrator upheld the lease deed cancellation but instructed the respondent to refund the security deposit and perimeter fencing costs.

The respondent contested the award in the District and Sessions Court under Section 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. The court set aside the award, saying that the Lease Deed did not stipulate refund of deposit or reimbursement of perimeter wall costs. The Supreme Court upheld this decision. **BMB**

HIGH COURT

Probe ordered against cop for role in mutts' dispute

The High Court has directed a departmental probe against a police circle inspector for alleged involvement in a dispute between two mutts. The dispute concerns the premises of Sri Narahariteertha Swamy Brundavana in Hospet taluk, Vijayanagara district, which has been under legal contention between the Uttaradi Mutt and Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt since 1998.

The High Court granted an interim stay on July 15 against interference in Uttaradi Mutt's custody of the premises, whilst the Supreme Court instructed maintenance of status quo on January 17.

Uttaradi Mutt approached the high court seeking protection against forced handover of the premises' keys. They also requested disciplinary proceedings against Circle Inspector Rajesh A Batgurki for allegedly demanding key handover on January 10.

Justice M Nagprasanna of the Dharwad bench issued this ruling on March 4, which was subsequently published. The court observed that since 1999, warnings against police interference had been issued unless public order was threatened.

The court noted, "Despite that, the 3rd respondent (inspector).....has directed handing over of keys, while that is not the order in the regular second appeal.

There was no order of any court .....to call the petitioner and ask handing over of the keys. In a purely civil matter, the police have sought to interfere."

The court concluded, "There is material in the case at hand to demonstrate that the 3rd respondent has indulged in abuse of his power. Therefore, it becomes a fit case to direct the commissioner, to initiate a departmental inquiry against the 3rd respondent....." The court stipulated a four-month deadline for inquiry completion. **BMB**

2 killed in car-bus crash

A 31-year-old software engineer and his mother lost their lives, while three others sustained injuries, in a head-on collision between their car and a private bus near Gopalli Gate, on the outskirts under Kencharlahalli police station limits, on Sunday.

The deceased have been identified as Dhananjaya Reddy and his mother Kalavathy (55). The injured include Dhananjaya's wife, daughter, and sister-in-law, who were rushed to the hospital and are out of danger.

Dhananjaya and his family were returning home to Bengaluru after attending a family function in Kadapa. While negotiating a curve, he lost control of the vehicle, colliding head-on with an oncoming private bus. The impact of the crash caused the car to topple and catch fire. **BMB**

Commutes in Bengaluru cost as much as a meal, shows study

Survey respondents report cutting down on non-essential travel due to rising costs, further restricting urban mobility

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A recent survey by Greenpeace India found that 72.9% of respondents spent as much on transport as they do on a meal, with Bengaluru Metro ridership dropping by 13% after the fare hike on February 9. A month after the increase, commuters and citizens gathered inside the metro to demand an immediate rollback, highlighting concerns about affordability and accessibility. The fare hike has disproportionately affected low and middle-income groups, students, and working professionals, with women facing additional mobility and safety challenges.

The results of the survey revealed that 40.4% of respondents used the metro as their primary mode of transport, while 62.9% relied on public transport, including buses. Around 73.4% of commuters spent ₹50 to ₹150 daily on transportation, and 68% stated that the fare hike has made metro travel expensive. Additionally, 75.4% reported reducing non-essential travel, and 38.2% of women have cut down their movement due to the increased fares.

Greenpeace India urged Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to reverse the fare hike and called on the government to prioritize affordable, gender-sensitive, and disability-friendly public transport instead of transferring costs onto commuters. The increase in fares has forced families to reconsider school locations, and pushed people across income groups to explore alternative transport modes. As Bengaluru faces severe climate challenges, including air pollution and heat waves, investing in efficient public transport is essential to reduce congestion and build climate resilience. Instead of increasing fares, the government could introduce congestion charges and stricter parking policies to generate revenue, while discouraging excessive car use. Large-scale car-centric projects, like the proposed ₹19,000 crore tunnel project, are seen as temporary solutions that divert critical funds away from sustainable transport infrastructure.

Greenpeace India campaigner Aakiz Farooq stressed the need for public transport to serve the people rather than profit-driven interests. He said that the metro fare hike places an additional burden on commuters already struggling with affordability and accessibility. "Given the ongoing environmental crisis, investment in efficient and affordable mass transit is crucial. We call for a dedicated public transport budget and urge the government to introduce Climate Tickets to incentivize public transport use," he said.

The survey said that with every fare hike, Bengaluru Metro, once envisioned as an inclusive and affordable transport system, has become increasingly exclusionary. Students, IT professionals, informal workers, women, and low-income groups are among those most affected. Many commuters are now forced to switch to more expensive and polluting alternatives, worsening road congestion and air pollution. Vehicular emissions remain one of the largest contributors to pollutants like Particulate Matter (PM) 10 and 2.5, which pose a severe health risk to citizens, and drive climate change.

Irene Ann Kuttichira, a regular metro commuter said, "Many people depend on the metro for work or education, and increasing costs make commuting unaffordable. There is a need for a transport system that serves everyone, not just those who can afford to pay more."

Due to high metro fare, many commuters are now forced to switch to more expensive and polluting alternatives

As Bengaluru faces severe climate challenges, including air pollution and heat waves, investing in efficient public transport is essential to reduce congestion and build climate resilience

Animal activists rejoice as vet hospital to stay put

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Animal activists and cattle owners have welcomed Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department's plans to reverse its decision to hand over two acres of land, where a veterinary hospital is located. The government had issued an order on March 4, withdrawing its earlier decision of handing over the land to the Department of Minorities Welfare for the construction of Maulana Azad and Morarji Desai Residential Schools.

Notably, animal activists and cattle owners had staged a protest, demanding that the government withdraw its order passed on February 26, 2024, to shift the Government Veterinary Hospital situated at Chalavadi Palya on Mysore Road to Jayanagar.

Bangalore Mirror published a story 'Controversy erupts over planned shift of veterinary hospital' on March 1, 2024, highlighting how the government's decision to shift the veterinary hospital to Jayanagar would affect hundreds of cattle owners. Currently, animal activists and cattle owners have welcomed the government order cancelling the decision to hand over the land, and relocate the veterinary hospital to Jayanagar.

"The decision to relocate the government veterinary hospital along the Goodshed Road on Mysore Road, at Chalavadi Palya ward in Chamarajpet Assembly constituency, has been withdrawn with immediate effect," the government order signed by S Mangala Gowri, Under Secretary of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, read.

Welcoming the government's decision to cancel the shift of the Government Veterinary Hospital, Karna G, one of the cattle owners at Chalavadi Palya, said that the decision to allow the Government Veterinary Hospital to function at the same location will be a great help for hundreds of cattle owners. "We do not want the government to shift the veterinary hospital to Jayanagar as it would be tough for us to take cattle all the way to Jayanagar for treatment," Karna said.

Demanding the government to upgrade the veterinary hospital, Rashmi D'Souza, a former member of Karnataka Animal Welfare Board, said that the hospital has been catering to the needs of not only cattle owners in the vicinity, but also those from Hosakerehalli, Girinagar, Nagarbhavi, Pantarapalya, and other areas. "The land was donated by some philanthropists. I appeal to the government to upgrade this veterinary hospital on par with the veterinary hospital on Queen's Road. We are ready to find donors for the development of the veterinary hospital," she said.

Arun Prasad, an animal activist, opined that the Animal Husbandry Department has to preserve the land for the welfare of animals. "The government should not allow the land meant for animal welfare for other purposes. It is the responsibility of the Animal Husbandry Minister to protect the land meant for the veterinary hospital. If not, let him resign immediately," he said.

Government Veterinary Hospital at Chalavadi Palya on Mysore Road

whatsapp MIRROR 9591233247

Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

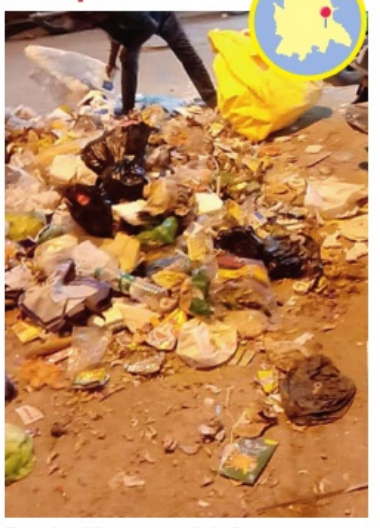
Footpath blockade

RR Nagar

Footpath near Rajarajeshwari Police Station is permanently blocked.

Rampant littering

Chickpet



Trash piling up at 4th Cross, Chickpet. Requesting urgent clean-up.

Smelly drain

Ramaiah Layout

Open, foul-smelling drain at ABC Park, Ramaiah Layout, Kacharakanahalli, persisting for a month. Authorities must act!

Construction debris on NH-75 imperils motorists

Despite BBMP fencing Vengaiah Lake to prevent dumping, construction debris is being dumped on road; activists demand stricter action, including CCTV surveillance

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All these years, construction debris used to be dumped on Vengaiah Lake bund along Old Madras Road, National Highway 75. With the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Lakes Department fencing the lake bund to prevent dumping debris, some irresponsible people began dumping construction debris on the road thus posing a danger to motorists, especially two-wheeler riders.

The motorists and lake activists said that dumping of debris has become a routine on the National Highway 75. They said the contractors to dispose of construction debris prefer lake bunds and roads as there will be no one to stop them.

Balaji Raghotham, a lake activist, happened to come across a few people unloading a tractor load of construction debris on the National Highway 75 near Vengaiah Lake on Friday night. They were all set to leave the place after unloading the debris but Balaji Raghotham made them clear the debris. "I not only shouted at them for dumping debris on the road but also made them clear debris on the road. Recently, one person got injured due to debris on the road," said Balaji Raghotham.

He said that he has already informed the people in charge of the toll plaza near Hoskote to keep a vigil on those dumping debris on the road along Vengaiah Lake bund. "I am happy with the toll plaza staff for their cooperation all these years. They have also taken measures to clear debris some time ago. I want the BBMP authorities and police to act tough against those dumping debris," he said.

Expressing concern over the dumping of debris on the road at night, a resident of TC Palya on the condition of anonymity has said the BBMP has vehicles and staff exclusively to keep a vigil on those dumping debris. "I want the authorities to intensify vigil on those dumping of debris at public places," he said.

Debris dumpers made to clear the waste on NH 75

"I want Lakes Department to install CCTV cameras along fence to deter people from dumping debris. I urge police to seize vehicles that are found unloading waste
–Mudassir, in charge, toll plaza

Meanwhile, Mudassir, in charge of the toll plaza, said the BBMP Lakes Department has taken measures to prevent dumping of debris into the lake. "The BBMP Lakes Department has fenced Vengaiah Lake to stop dumping of waste and debris. I want the Lakes Department to install CCTV cameras along the fence to deter people from dumping debris and waste. I urge police to seize one or two vehicles that were found unloading debris on the road. Such a severe action will stop others dumping debris," he said, adding that he would intensify vigil on people who dump debris along Vengaiah Lake and Yele Mallappa Shetty Lake.

City police, women lawyers team up for free legal aid

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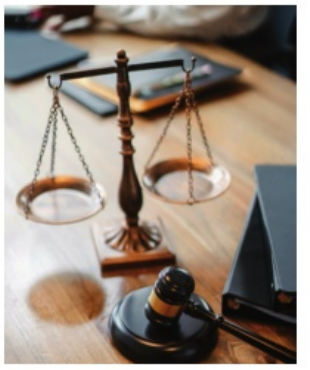

The city police signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Saturday with the Karnataka Federation of Women Lawyers to provide legal support for women and children in distress. This initiative follows the city police's collaboration with PARIHAR and the Rotary Club of Bengaluru Prime (RBP) in celebrating International Women's Day.

Many women struggle to afford legal representation despite facing issues that require legal advice. This initiative serves as a crucial support system, offering both guidance and legal assistance to those in need. By providing pro bono services, meaning legal aid offered free of charge, this program ensures that women and children in distress receive the necessary legal support when disputes remain unresolved after counselling.

Commissioner of Police, B Dayananda, speaking to BM, emphasised the importance of legal aid for women facing marital and other disputes. He stated that eight police stations across the city have two counsellors each to assist women with such issues. When counselling does not lead to a resolution, the cases are referred for legal assistance.

"While handling these cases, we have come to know that many women, whether from economically weaker backgrounds or even those who are educated, lack legal knowledge. Hence, we need to provide legal assistance for their various queries and also address issues related to marriage, property, and other disputes. These eight police stations, through Parihar, receive some legal support. Now, with the Rotary Club and the Karnataka Federation of Women Lawyers coming together, this initiative will further strengthen legal assistance," he said.

With dedicated legal professionals and advocates, the program strengthens legal empowerment and protection, making legal assistance more accessible. As part of this initiative, four police stations have been assigned to the Rotary Club, while the remaining four will be handled by the Karnataka Federation of Women Lawyers which has counsellors in place. Lawyers will be available at designated times in these police stations, allowing women in need of legal guidance to approach them directly.

Possibility for expansion to all victims

Highlighting the need to broaden legal aid beyond women's issues, the Commissioner of Police stressed the importance of supporting victims of serious and violent crimes. "Many times, the accused hires a senior lawyer, and victims hesitate to seek legal support. If there is someone to give voice to victims, not just women, but all victims of serious crimes including murder, rape, and POCSO cases, it will be immensely helpful."

This expansion would ensure that victims of violent crimes receive proper legal representation, helping them navigate the legal system with confidence and support.

Florists upset over Tejasvi's remarks

The South India Floriculture Association President TM Aravind has appealed to Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya to withdraw his statement referring to flower bouquets as waste.

During a Facebook Live session inviting the public to his wedding reception, MP Tejasvi Surya requested people to refrain from giving flower bouquets, terming them as waste. Aravind emphasised that such remarks from a responsible leader are inappropriate and undermine the hard work of farmers who depend on floriculture. In Karnataka, floriculture is practised on over 38,000 hectares, with commercial flower crops cultivated on more than 1,500 hectares. The state produces a variety of flowers, including roses, chrysanthemums, marigolds, jasmines.

KSRTC bags awards

The KSRTC (Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation) has won three National Public Bus Transport Excellence Awards for 2023-24 from the Association of State Road Transport Undertakings (ASRTU). ASRTU was established on August 13, 1965, and represents 62 State Road Transport Corporations. It operates under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India, and works for the development of the road transport system.

KSRTC received awards for innovative branding and image-building practices for Ashwamedha Buses, personnel welfare and productivity, and digitalisation initiatives. The award ceremony was held on March 8, in New Delhi. The awards were presented by Dr Kiran Bedi, IPS (Retd), and received by Gururaja H, Deputy CTM (O), and Radha, Labour and Welfare Officer.

ADVERTORIAL

Omega cabs: Training workshop for cab drivers

Scholarship Award for Drivers' Children and distribution of sewing machines to selected drivers' families by Omega

Leading Employee Transportation company Omega has organised a comprehensive workshop on March 3, with demonstrations, to educate cab drivers on discipline, punctuality, cleanliness, and professionalism. In addition to the training program, Omega has introduced a social initiative in Bangalore – The Scholarship Award for Drivers' Children. This scholarship is exclusively available to children of cab drivers pursuing higher education. Along with this initiative free sewing machines were distributed to the families of selected cab drivers. The aim of this distribution is to become financially stable and support their families and contribute to the empowerment of women.

Ramadevara Betta hosts rare vulture nesting

Rare long-billed vultures have been breeding at Ramadevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary for fourth consecutive year, marking significant conservation success story

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Ramanagara's Ramadevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary has welcomed a new guest once again this year, as a vulture chick has been born, marking the fourth consecutive year of successful breeding in the sanctuary. Established in 2012 as India's first vulture sanctuary, Ramadevara Betta initially saw no breeding activity among its resident vultures. However, over the past four years, the birds have been consistently reproducing, a positive sign for the conservation of these endangered species. Typically, vultures breed only once a year, making this development crucial for their survival.

Conservation win despite vulture decline

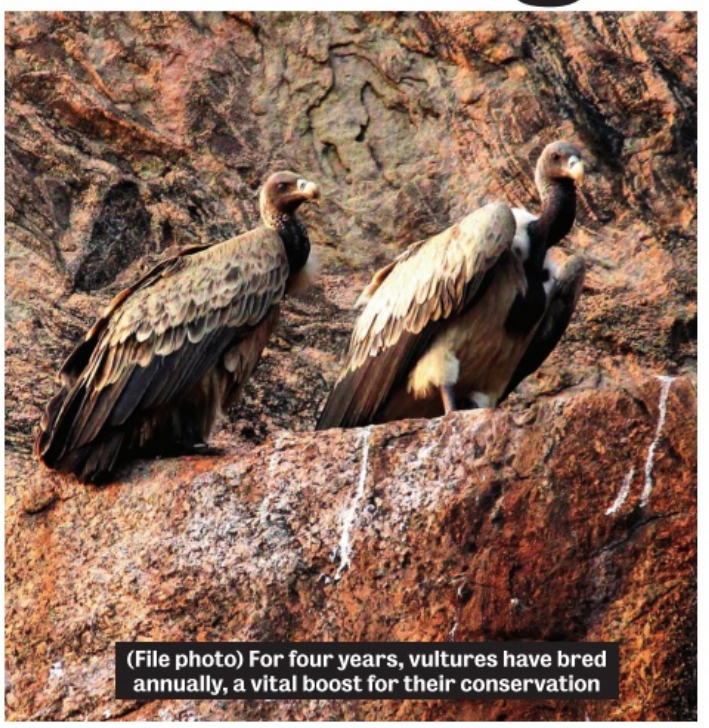
Vulture populations have been steadily declining, prompting the government to establish this sanctuary at Ramadevara Betta to protect them. While early conservation efforts did not immediately yield results, the past four years have shown continuous breeding activity. This progress has brought hope among conservationists and environmentalists alike. According to forest department officials, a vulture chick hatched around 15 days ago. It will take another two to three months before it is strong enough to take flight like a mature vulture. Officials are closely monitoring its movements and overall health.

Two vulture species found

Forest officials said that the Ramadevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary is home to two species of vultures: the Long-billed Vulture (Gyps indicus) and the Egyptian Vulture (Neophron percnopterus). The long-billed vulture is particularly rare and endangered, making its continuous breeding at the sanctuary a significant conservation achievement. For the past four years, the long-billed vultures have successfully bred each year, increasing their numbers. Currently, two pairs of adult long-billed vultures and three chicks, including this year's newborn, can be spotted at the sanctuary.

Urbanisation impact

Vultures typically begin their breeding process in winter, preferring undisturbed and quiet environments. However, the new Bengaluru-Mysuru National Highway, which runs near the sanctuary, has increased vehicular movement in the area, posing potential challenges to the vultures' habitat. Despite this, breeding has continued, indicating the resilience of the species in this protected region.



(File photo) For four years, vultures have bred annually, a vital boost for their conservation

850-acre sanctuary ensuring vulture survival

A Forest official said, "Spanning 850 acres, the Ramadevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary was declared a protected area by the Karnataka government in 2012. Vultures from surrounding regions, including Bannerghatta National Park, are known to frequent the sanctuary. In the past, migratory vultures from North India visited Ramadevara Betta during winter, staying temporarily before returning to their native regions once temperatures rose. However, recent years have seen a decline in such migratory vulture sightings, with the resident population becoming the primary focus of conservation efforts. While Egyptian vultures continue to be spotted in numbers exceeding 50 individuals, the long-billed vulture remains the sanctuary's most endangered resident." Experts believe that the continued breeding of these rare vultures in Ramadevara Betta is a strong testament to the effectiveness of conservation measures and a beacon of hope for their survival.

Women's Day awards at Manipal

Manipal Hospitals marked International Women's Day 2025 by recognising women entrepreneurs through the Manipal Community Connect initiative under Manipal Sakhi. The Manipal Community Connect (MCC) program is a platform to engage beyond healthcare. From various nominations, 14 finalists were selected and grouped into three panels: Technology and Data Services (4 finalists), Social Impact and Educational Training (5 finalists), and Art, Fashion, and Clothing (5 finalists).

A panel of 14 judges, including leaders from Manipal Hospitals, industry professionals, and entrepreneurs, evaluated the finalists based on their business journey, motivations, and vision. Winners were selected through judges' scores and audience polls. Lalithalakshmi V Bilgi, leading Kou-Chan Knowledge Convergence Pvt. Ltd. and founder of SahayaManjari, won in the Technology and Data Services category. Tejal Shah, founder of Happiness is Khushi, won in the Social Impact and Educational Training category. Sandhya Ravi, owner of Sassy Eleganza, won in the Art, Fashion, and Clothing category for her bridal boutique specialising in custom-stitched clothing and her brand, Little Scarlet. — BMB

Forest clearance soon: Minister

The The long-delayed Yettinahole drinking water project, aimed at supplying water to the arid regions of Karnataka, is set to receive forest clearance soon, according to Forest, Ecology, and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre. Speaking after a high-level meeting chaired by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar in Bengaluru on Sunday, Khandre expressed confidence that the Union government will soon grant clearance for the project. He stated that the state government has already invested ₹16,000 crore into the project, and all necessary regulatory compliances have been followed. — BMB

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Defending recliners

Speaker UT Khader has introduced 20 recliner chairs in the Assembly lounge, allowing MLAs to catch some rest during lunch breaks. Responding to criticism, Khader defended the move, urging people not to see MLAs as adversaries but as fathers, brothers, and uncles. "Not all legislators are young. If airports and other places can have such facilities, why not for our lawmakers?" he questioned. Traditionally, MLAs head home during breaks, but the idea behind these recliners is to ensure they stay put and participate actively in sessions. And don't worry about the budget – the recliners are rented, keeping costs low.

Word war

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has come under criticism for his controversial statement of 'tightening nuts and bolts' for the film fraternity. When asked about the BJP and certain film industry members criticising his remarks as harsh, he said, "I don't know how to sugarcoat my words—I speak directly. Some of you (journalists) and others refer to me as a 'rock.' Am I really a rock? Do I look like one? A stone's nature depends on how it is treated—if sculpted, it gains form; if worshipped, it becomes culture. This is my way of speaking. If my style is incorrect, I will refine it, but I have spoken the truth," he asserted.

Viral 'resignation' video

A video of Dr G Parameshwar declaring his willingness to resign as Home Minister has taken social media by storm! During a recent Koratagere party workers' meeting, some supporters complained, "You're not accessible to the people of the constituency." In response, Parameshwar made a dramatic statement: "I apologise if I haven't met your expectations. If you insist, I'm ready to resign as Home Minister!" The moment he mentioned resignation, party workers erupted in protest, urging him not to step down. Clarifying his stance, Parameshwar later said, "My intention was only to be more available to my people, nothing else." So, is it a heartfelt commitment or just a rhetorical masterstroke?

Prioritising education

In a remarkable gesture, the residents of Vanageri village in Kushtagi have chosen to invest their temple donation funds into education by constructing three well-equipped classrooms for their local government school. Vanageri, a small village 5 km from the taluk centre, faced a shortage of classrooms and facilities in its upgraded Government Higher Primary School (Class 1-8). With LKG, UKG, and English medium Class 1 introduced this year, the need for additional classrooms became pressing. Recognising this, villagers and trustees of Shivanamma Devi Temple utilised approximately ₹20 lakh—collected over several years for temple activities—to build three modern classrooms instead. "The villagers have set an inspiring example by working hand in hand with the government for school development. A proposal for a high school has also been submitted," said Surendra Kamble, Block Education Officer, Kushtagi.

Stirring controversy

Karnataka's Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna stirred controversy when he compared an investigating agency to a trip to the graveyard! During a KDP meeting recently, Rajanna vented his anger over Lokayukta investigations, saying, "Handing over a case to an investigating agency is no different from heading straight to the cemetery!" His comments came in response to MLA MT Krishnappa's demand for an inquiry into a large-scale fake transport pass scam, where despite clear evidence of fraud, no action had been taken against those involved. Rajanna, however, remained sceptical, stating, "We've all seen how investigations go."

Clearing air

Putting an end to all sparks of confusion, Energy Minister KJ George has clarified that the Karnataka government is paying the Gruha Jyothi subsidy in advance to ESCOMs—not a single rupee will be recovered from consumers! He debunked the rumour that ESCOMs have asked the KERC to bill consumers if the government fails to pay the subsidy upfront. "There's no such plan. The government is footing the bill as promised. When Gruha Jyothi was launched, we pledged free electricity for up to 200 units for households, fully covered by the government. The funds are already allocated, and since August 2023, every rupee of subsidy has been prepaid to ESCOMs. The 2008 KERC rules allow ESCOMs to recover subsidies from consumers only if the government fails to pay upfront. But that's just a general clause—it has been completely misinterpreted in this case," George told journos. — Sridhar Vivan

BM SIMPLY PUT

Today we look at why Karnataka government is mulling closure of 9 universities

Shutters on temples of learning

The state government is considering shutting down nine universities that were established during the previous BJP regime. The decision is based on financial constraints, lack of land availability, and insufficient infrastructure. The Cabinet subcommittee has recommended their closure. However, education experts argue that closing these universities suddenly would cause more harm than good.

What are the potential consequences?

The closure of universities will significantly impact higher education, particularly limiting access for rural students. It may also lead to a decline in the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER), hindering India's goal of increasing higher education participation. Managing the transition for current students will pose administrative challenges, leaving thousands of students uncertain about their future. Additionally, reducing the number of universities could result in overcrowding, ultimately affecting the quality of education.

Which universities are affected?

The list of nine universities facing closure is yet to be fully disclosed, but these institutions were set up in different districts to ensure wider access to higher education.

Where does India stand in higher education?

According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), India needs 1,300 additional universities to achieve its higher education targets. Karnataka alone requires at least 50 more universities to improve accessibility. While countries like the USA have a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 88%, Germany 70%, and China 51%, India stands at just 36%. The central government aims to raise GER to 50% by 2035.

When did the issue begin?

The previous BJP government introduced the 'One University Per District' initiative, aiming to expand higher education access. However, these universities were established without fully planned infrastructure. Instead of investing in their development, the current administration is now moving toward their closure.

How do other countries manage universities?

In foreign countries, universities are established on just 20-30 acres of land and operate without relying solely on government funding. They offer integrated courses, including Medical, Engineering, and MBA programs. Additionally, public input is sought before making any decision to close an institution.

How can Karnataka address the issue?

Experts said that the government can allocate additional funding to support universities instead of shutting them down. Partnering with corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds can ensure financial sustainability, while encouraging alumni contributions can provide additional resources, as seen in many global universities. Establishing a university should be backed by strong infrastructure and financial planning to prevent future challenges.

Expert opinion

Former Vice-Chancellor of University of Mysore, Prof. KS Rangappa, stated that closing universities is an easy decision, but the real challenge lies in managing its consequences. Former Vice-Chancellor of Bangalore University, Prof. K.R. Venugopal, expressed concern that girls from rural areas would be the most affected by such closures. Prof. Padma Shekhar, Former Vice-Chancellor of Sanskrit University, emphasized that the government should focus on revitalising universities rather than shutting them down.

No university closures, only mergers: DK Shivakumar

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has assured that the Karnataka government will not shut down any universities but will instead merge smaller universities with larger, well-established ones. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly recently, he said, "University of Mysore and Bangalore universities have global recognition, whereas smaller, newly established universities lack such credibility. This can create challenges for students. Therefore, instead of closing new universities, we will merge them with larger institutions."

SPORT

Champions Trophy: Unbeaten India bags third title

India's spinners called the shots majorly to pick five wickets collectively on a sluggish pitch, while captain Rohit Sharma top-scored with 76 and KL Rahul stayed calm to hit an unbeaten 34 to give India their third Champions Trophy triumph with a four-wicket win over New Zealand in the final at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday.

On a sunny afternoon, contrasting half-centuries from all-rounders Daryl Mitchell (63 off 101 balls) and Michael Bracewell (53 not out off 40 balls) took New Zealand to 251/7 in their 50 overs. Wrist spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakaravarthy picked two wickets each, while Ravindra Jadeja had a scalp to his name.

A chase of 252 looked an easy task for India on a pitch which didn't give much turn, as Rohit, who hit seven fours and three sixes in his 83-ball 76, and Shubman Gill had a 105-run opening stand. But a fighting New Zealand making regular strikes meant there was sudden nervous energy in India's chase.

But the enviable batting depth, despite New Zealand's spinners fighting hard, meant India got over the line with an over to spare. While Iyer made 48 off 62 balls, Rahul kept his calm to stay till the end and be 34 not out off 33 balls to ensure India got its third Champions Trophy title after 2002 and 2013. It's also India's second ICC trophy win in 12 months after the T20 World Cup triumph in June last year.

The Dubai triumph now makes India the most successful team in the Champions Trophy's history and they accomplished it in front of a stadium majorly filled by Indian fans. The win would also come as a soothing balm for the Indian team and its ardent fans after missing out on the 2023 ODI World Cup triumph on home soil.

KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja celebrate their victory during the ICC Champions Trophy final at the Dubai International Stadium in Dubai on Sunday

Rohit began the chase in his typical quick fashion by pulling Kyle Jamieson for six, before hitting William O'Rourke for a brace of fours. He greeted Nathan Smith with a pre-mediated swing going for six, before pulling Jamieson off the backfoot for another boundary, even as Shubman Gill was dropped on six by Daryl Mitchell at mid-wicket.

There was no stopping Rohit as he brought up India's fifty with a mighty six down the ground off Smith, before lap-sweeping and cutting him for two boundaries to bring up his fifty in just 41 balls. Though Santner and Rachin Ravindra kept the openers quiet, they weren't as crafty in maintaining tight line and length like the Indian spin bowling quartet, thus unable to stop the Indian openers from keeping the scoreboard ticking. Gill broke the shackles by dancing down the pitch to smash Ravindra over long-on for six, before Rohit pulled Santner for another boundary as India reached their hundred in just 17 overs. But after drinks break, Glenn Phillips leapt to take a stunning one-handed catch at extra cover and dismiss Gill for 31 off Santner's bowling. Michael Bracewell struck on his very first ball as he got one to turn in from outside the off-stump and go past Virat Kohli's flick to trap him lbw for just one. With the spinners bowling neatly, it meant Rohit and Shreyas Iyer had to cut down on risks.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 251/7 in 50 overs (Daryl Mitchell 63, Michael Bracewell 53 not out; Kuldeep Yadav 2-40, Varun Chakaravarthy 2-45) lost to India 254/6 in 49 overs (Rohit Sharma 76, Shreyas Iyer 48; Michael Bracewell 2-28, Mitchell Santner 2-46) by four wickets

-IANS

Police urge background checks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

increasing pattern where domestic workers, after gaining the trust of their employers, commit thefts and disappear. Many of these individuals use fake identity proofs or change their addresses frequently, making it difficult to track them."

One of the biggest challenges in solving these cases is the lack of proper documentation. Many residents hire domestic workers without verifying their identity or registering them with the police.

Senior police officials explained that employers should ensure that they conduct a thorough background check before hiring domestic help.

"They should maintain a copy of their identity proofs. It's not just police verification, people often hire through reference and fail to ask the person who referred them how they know this employee," said an official.

He gave an example of a case in Koramangala. "A person had hired a driver, who stole Rs. 50,000 and escaped in a taxi. However, he was caught immediately but when we asked the victim how they knew this person they said someone had referred, but no background checks were done," he said.

Investigations have also revealed that organised gangs are exploiting this vulnerability. In some cases, workers move from one household to another, committing crimes before disappearing into different cities.

In most cases, house owners tend to trust the help and often handover the key to them, especially in some particular situations like if they are going out of station, senior police officials added.

In January, Bellandur police arrested a cab driver for allegedly using a duplicate key to rob his former employer's house. Investigations revealed that he had previously been entrusted with the keys and had secretly made a copy.

In another case, a caretaker stole 157 grams of gold jewellery worth Rs 11.5 lakh from her employer in Bhuvaneswari Nagar.

Similarly, two Nepali domestic workers drugged an elderly man in Jayanagar and stole valuables worth Rs 1.12 crore.

In October last year, Konanakunte police arrested a 25-year-old domestic worker for stealing Rs 12 lakh worth of gold, which the family discovered missing during Lakshmi Puja preparations.

Police are urging residents to use online services that offer verified domestic help. Authorities have also proposed mandatory police verification for all domestic workers and if homeowners plan to be away for more than one night, they should inform the local police, as they can visit those houses during day and night beats.

BM Finance Fundas

NSC vs bank FDs: Which is a better tax saving option?

When it comes to secure, tax-saving investment options, two of the most popular choices are the National Savings Certificate (NSC) and tax-saving Fixed Deposits (FDs) offered by banks. Both provide assured returns, tax benefits under Section 80C , and a lock-in period of five years.

However, their interest rates, compounding methods, and tax treatment vary, affecting overall returns.

NSC: This is a popular government-backed savings scheme that offers a safe and reliable investment option for individuals looking for assured returns and tax benefits. NSC is designed to encourage long-term savings with a fixed maturity period of five years.

TDS: Note that there is no Tax deduction at source(TDS) for investment in NSC while TDS will be applicable if interest earned in a financial year exceeds Rs 40,000 for general citizens and Rs 50,000 for senior citizens for this financial year. From next financial year, the TDS threshold will be higher as it will be Rs 50,000 for general citizens and Rs 1 lakh for senior citizens.

Interest calculation: NSCs follow the cumulative interest payout method, where the interest is reinvested. Interest in NSC is compounded annually, payable at maturity. Banks offer both cumulative and non-cumulative interest payout options. While non cumulative FDs pay the interest on quarterly intervals, the cumulative FDs reinvest the interest, leading to compounded growth over time.

Bank FD with quarterly compounding of interest may offer much higher annual yield than the annual interest rate it offers. For instance, an FD with 7.5% annual interest rate will eventually yield 7.71% annual interest rate higher than the 7.7% annual interest rate offered by NSC which compounds annually.

Tax benefits: Both NSC and tax-saving FDs qualify for deductions of up to Rs 1.5 lakh under Section 80C. However, the tax treatment of interest earnings differs

NSC: Interest earned is taxable, but it is deemed reinvested (except for the last year), making it eligible for a deduction under Section 80C. The interest earned in the fifth year is taxable and must be reported in your income tax return under the head "Income from Other Sources".

Tax-saving FD: Interest earned is fully taxable as per your income tax slab. TDS applies in case of multiple fixed deposits leading to annual interest earning going above the TDS limit.

Lock-in period: NSC has a lock-in period of 5 years. Premature withdrawal is not allowed except in cases of certain conditions such as death, court order. Tax-saving FD also has a mandatory lock-in period of 5 years, and premature withdrawal is not allowed.

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I, Anand.V. R/O No 662/17, Vighneshwara Layout, Arshinakunte, Nelamangala, Bengaluru- 562123, Changed my name from Anand to Anand. V for all future purposes. (V full form is Vasudev).

I Omesh Ramteke S/o Dhananjay Ramteke R/o no 48 flat no 202 spandana apt prashant layout whitefield bengaluru 560066 have changed my name to Omesh D Ramteke.

I, Gangadhar Siddaiah R/a No. 3022, 2nd Floor, 6th Cross, 5th Main, K S Layout, 1st Stage, J P Nagar, Bengaluru-560078. Have Changed to GANGADHARA S. Afft Dt: 08.03.2025. Sworn Before Notary: Devaraju. E.

I Samiulla Abdul Saleem S/O, Abdul Saleem R/o 85 M S Palya Near Urdu School M S Palya Banglore North Bengaluru Karnataka - 560097 have changed my name to Sami Ulla.

I Rajalaxmi Shetty D/o Ashok Kumar Shetty R/o K001, Topaz, Sankalp Square, Devinagar Main Road, Rmv 2nd Stage, Bengaluru- 560094 have changed my name to Rajalaxmi Ashok Shetty for all purposes.

ABDUL Farzuk S/O Abdul Jowhor Residing At #122, Sarbandepalya, Bangalore South, Po: J P Nagar, Dist: Bangalore, Karnataka-560078, Have Changed My Name To Abdul Ghafoor For All Future Purposes

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Scholarships go off-course

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

even full-time medical students' scholarships were stopped, despite their courses running without interruption."

Pending payments worth Rs 263.57 crore

Students who secured admission under the government quota are entitled to scholarships to cover tuition fees. However, over the past four years, scholarships have been credited for only one academic year, leaving the remaining amount unpaid. The Backward Classes Welfare Department has pending scholarship payments amounting to Rs 263.57 crore from 2020-21 to 2023-24. The highest number of pending scholarship cases are reported in districts like Bengaluru Urban (69,127), Belagavi (53,753), and Davanagere (74,531), among others.

Reasons behind the delay

Sources said that the delay in scholarship disbursement can be attributed to several factors, including the government's failure to release funds on time, issues related to Aadhaar linking and discrepancies in student records, errors in submitted documents, and technical glitches that have caused delays in Aadhaar verification. Under the current scholarship structure, medical students receive Rs 1.77 lakh annually, with Rs 1.10 lakh provided by the central government (NSP) and Rs 67,000 by the state government (SSP). Meanwhile, engineering students from OBC categories are eligible for Rs 60,000, while SC/ST students receive Rs 70,000.

Government and student reactions

Shivaraj Tangadagi, Minister for Backward Classes Welfare, said, "Officials are gathering information regarding the delay. Steps will be taken for the immediate disbursement of pending scholarships."

Ramanna P, a student leader, spoke about the problems this delay has caused. "The delay in scholarship payments is making it difficult for students to continue their studies. If the government does not act soon, we will launch state-wide protests."

Meanwhile, a district officer from the Backward Classes Welfare Department, explained that technical issues have caused delays in processing applications. Students from nursing, medical, and B.Ed colleges who submitted applications late are also facing scrutiny before approvals. Currently, 4,90,372 students across 31 districts in Karnataka are waiting for their scholarships, hoping for a resolution to their financial struggles.

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In a working mum's shoes

Modern workplaces were never designed for mothers, and it's time for that to change

Close to 80 per cent of mothers work outside the home, yet they are consistently paid less for their work and passed up for job opportunities.A recent survey from the United States found that two-thirds of mothers considered leaving the workforce in 2024 due to the stress and cost of child care — an issue most pronounced among Gen Z mothers, with 82 per cent reporting these concerns.

Our recent research study calls for recognition of the physical and emotional toll of motherhood on women at work. The essay draws on a combination of personal experience and academic research to examine situations where mothers are pulled between work and family obligations.

We found that many working mothers are faced with the impossible trade-off of balancing full-time work with full-time mothering. It's no wonder that many mothers feel like they don't belong in the workplace.

An impossible trade-off

The demands of the modern workplace are at odds with contemporary expectations of motherhood. Today, mothers spend twice as much time with their children as they did in the 1970s.

Contemporary mothers are expected to practise "intensive mothering," a parenting style that requires them to be intimately involved in the minutiae of their children's lives, like attending multiple after-school activities.

On the other hand, professional workplaces are becoming increasingly demanding of all workers. American sociologist Alison Wynn coined the term "everwork" to refer to the "combination of overwork, facetime, constant availability, and unpredictability" that have become the norm in professional workplaces.

Wynn refers to mothers as "tightrope walkers" trying to balance personal and professional responsibilities under the conditions of everwork, with the potential to fall at any time. Worse still, mothers who try to reconcile their personal and professional obligations by leveraging flexible working options are often penalised with more intense workloads and lost opportunities for professional development.

The simultaneously increasing demands of motherhood and professional life are untenable. Women are expected to work in spaces where performance expectations are simply inconsistent with the reality of family life. Naturally, this is taking a toll: almost half of Canadian mothers report they've reached their "breaking point," meaning they feel overworked, overwhelmed and undervalued.

> **Contemporary mothers are expected to practise 'intensive mothering', a parenting style that requires them to be intimately involved in the minutiae of their children's lives, like attending after-school activities**

Struggling to fit into workplaces

Not only do many women believe workplaces are hostile to motherhood, but many also feel that their bodies are not welcome there. Societal norms dictate how women should look and dress at work.

This stress only intensifies during pregnancy. Sociologist David J. Hutson explains how pregnant women oscillate between concealing their bodies in early pregnancy to learning how to deal with unwanted comments and uninvited touching in later maternity.

Many pregnant women are expected to endure this uncomfortable behaviour as a form of emotional labour, a term coined by US sociologist Arlie Hochschild to describe the way women are taught to manage their emotions to make others feel better.

Although laws exist to protect pregnant women from discrimination, this doesn't prevent colleagues from engaging in practices that make pregnant women feel like they do not belong.

Many mothers also struggle with the physical realities of having a postpartum body in the workplace, such as dealing with leaky breast milk overflows from engorged breasts, unpredictable menstrual cycles and other postpartum changes. While some workplaces provide breastfeeding spaces, this is far from the norm, leaving women to adapt to the rhythms and spaces of the office on their own.

Even long after giving birth, women must remain attentive of their appearance at work. Researchers show that women who look too "mothering" risk being taken less seriously at work. Dressing like a mom is sometimes used as an insult to describe women who choose an easy to manage hairstyle, don't wear makeup or prioritise comfort over fashion when choosing their clothes.

Women are expected to control and manage their bodies to conform to workplace norms before, during and after pregnancy — expectations that are at odds with their biology.

Making workplaces work for mothers

As experts in motherhood and mothers ourselves, we are adamant that things need to change. Our recent research outlined a three-pillar call to action to make workplaces more inclusive and equitable toward mothers.

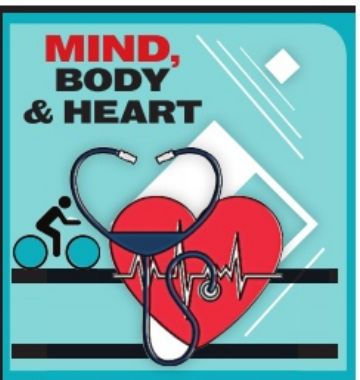
1. Enlist allies and resist negative attitudes about motherhood. Much of modern motherhood has become a logistical battle. Workplaces should implement institutional policies that recognise these logistical challenges, such as a four-day work week or flexible hours. Mothers must also build strong support networks, especially in places like the workplace where positions of power are often occupied by those who aren't mothers.

2. Recognise the physical toll of mothering and normalise maternal bodies. Workplaces must break down taboos surrounding maternal bodies by creating dedicated spaces for breastfeeding and breast pumping, and running awareness campaigns to normalize these needs. Workplaces should also hire more women — particularly mothers — into leadership roles. When maternal bodies become a common and accepted presence at work, they will no longer be a subject of scrutiny.

3. Recognise the emotional cost of mothering. The emotional burden of parenting, like imbuing children with good values and guiding their decision-making, is the most taxing part about being a parent. Workplaces should acknowledge this by redesigning performance evaluations to account for the time and energy needed for caregiving. This could also mean considering parental and caregiving roles in annual performance evaluation criteria.

Mothers and those who care about them must come together to demand better workplace conditions, not just for mothers, but for others as well. Only through collective action can we create lasting change.

(By Erica Pimentel, Queen's University, Ontario and Soraya Bel Hadj Ali, Kedge Business School, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Fluoride in drinking water

In foetal stage

Exposure to fluoride during the foetal stage or early childhood may impair cognition in children, a new study has warned. Published in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives, the study from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden now supports a few previous studies indicating that exposure to fluoride during the foetal stage or early childhood is not good for kids.

In well water

Elevated concentrations of fluoride can occur in well water, and in some countries, it is added to drinking water to counteract caries in the population. Fluoride occurs naturally as fluoride ions in drinking water, but the concentrations are generally low in public water supplies.

Addition to prevent caries

In some countries, such as the US, Canada, Chile, Australia and Ireland, fluoride is commonly added to the municipal water supply at around 0.7 mg per litre to prevent caries.

"Given the concern about health risks, the addition of fluoride to drinking water is controversial and has been widely debated in the USA and Canada," said Maria Kippler, associate professor at the Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet.

"Our results support the hypothesis that even relatively low concentrations of fluoride can impact children's early development," she mentioned.

The researchers followed 500 mothers and their children in rural Bangladesh, where fluoride occurs naturally in the drinking water, to investigate the association between early exposure to fluoride and children's cognitive abilities.

In toothpaste

"I'd like to stress that dental care products such as toothpaste are not normally a significant source of exposure since they are not intended for ingestion," said Dr Kippler.

–IANS

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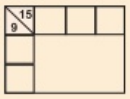
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

$\sqrt[3]{-0.064} = ?$

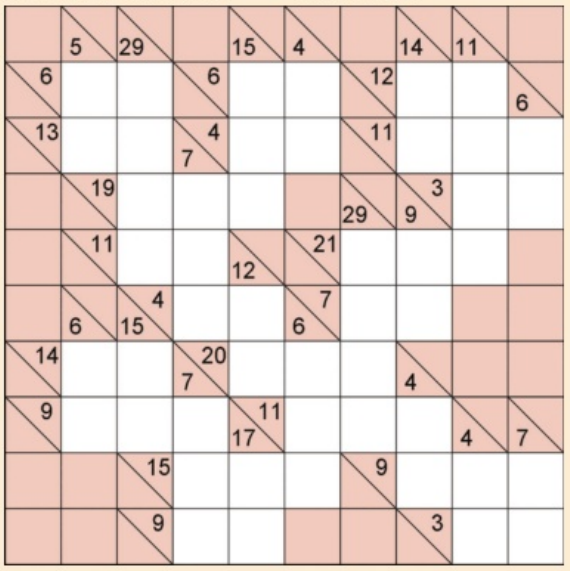
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

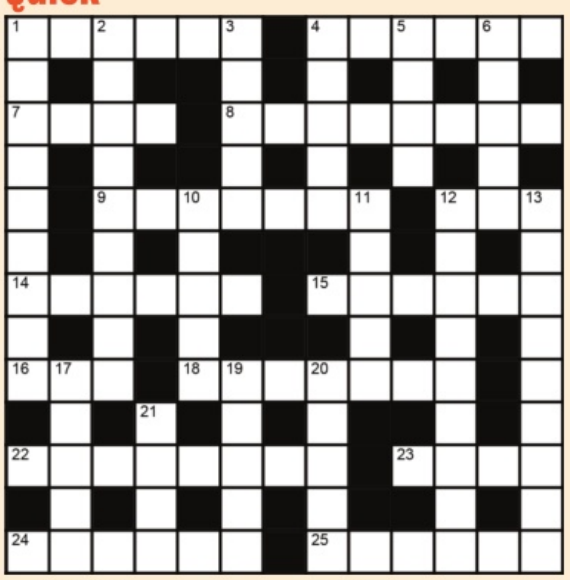


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Prayer-book (6)
4 Powerful or enormous (6)
7 Slightly open (4)
8 Theme park located on the Place Grounds (3,5)
9 Hearing distance (7)
12 'Sea' in French (3)
14 Going wrong (6)
15 Restrains, silences or becalms? (6)
16 Jurisprudence? (3)
18 Frozen mass in the sea (3-4)
22 An athletic contest in skiing and shooting (8)
23 Footnote abbr. (4)
24 Tailbone (6)
25 In truth (6)

DOWN

1 Had good intentions about or for (5,4)
2 Straw man (9)
3 Elevates (5)
4 Tropical fruit (5)
5 Radiance (4)
6 Thin silk fabric (5)
10 India's cricket trophy (5)
11 Aggregate (5)
12 Easily influenced (9)
13 Replied, answered or acknowledged (9)
17 Mexican friend (5)
19 Sepals collectively (5)
20 They could be mushrooms? (5)
21 Of the ear (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: O EQUALS G

QDY YF CQEJX UQDYU CQADLOQ EJ QDY YF TNC. TCCECLBFU TAF KEAADAU DR CQF KEJB. CQFM AFRWFNC CQEJXEJO.

Linemaro

Something wrong with my eyes. I just can't take them off you

Mindchow

What makes lovers never tire of one another is that they talk always about themselves

Joke of the day

Chinese proverbs: Man with one chopstick go hungry. Man who eat many prunes get good run for money. Man who stand on toilet is high on pot. Man who live in glass house should change cloth in basement

Loop

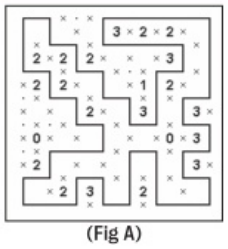
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

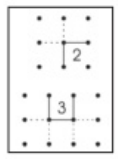
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

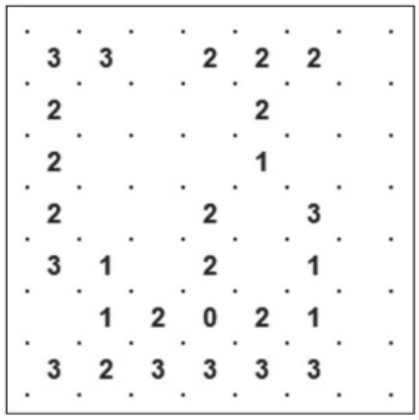
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



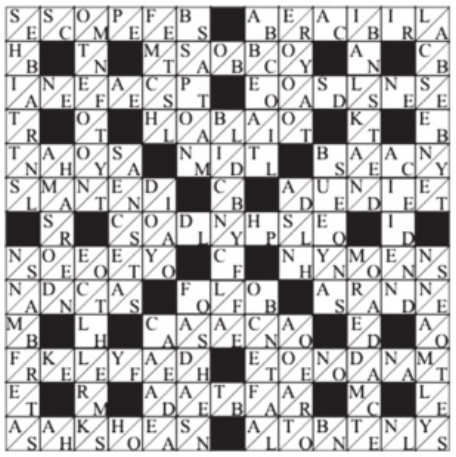
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



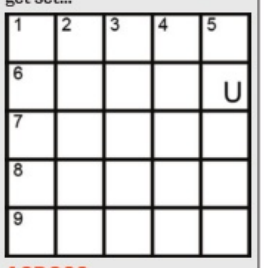
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

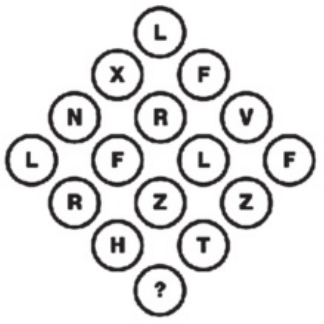
1 Marcs; 6 Oil up; 7 Users; 8 Prate; 9 He TNT

DOWN

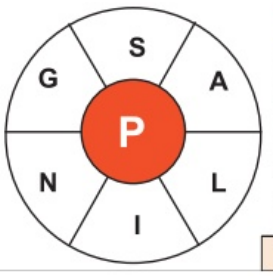
1 Strap; 2 Up Coe; 3 Siren; 4 Later; 5 Shtum

Mensapuzzle

Which letter is missing from the bottom of the grid?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

15 Average; 17 Good; 19 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

7			9	6				3
		6	7					
	4	9		3				5
		8		2	9		3	
		5				1		
	3		5	7		4		
8				1		3	4	
					7	8		
5				9	3			6

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

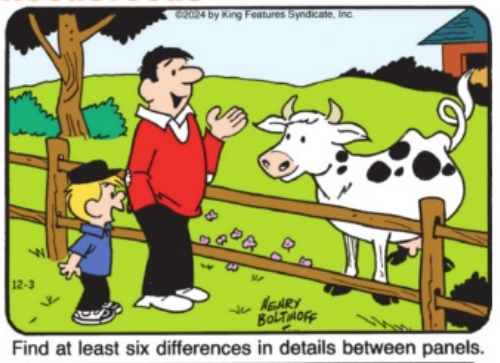
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 6
2 3 5 6

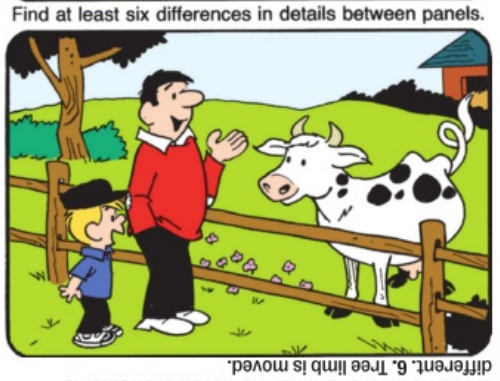
Medium = 16
3 5 8 9

Hard = 4
3 4 6 7

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



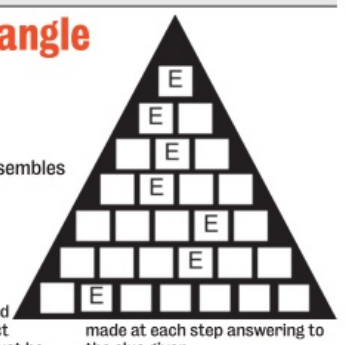
Differences: 1. Cap is larger. 2. Rail is higher. 3. Bush is different. 4. Horn is moved. 5. Sweater is different. 6. Tree limb is moved.

Riddler

I used to think that I'm important But now people tell me I'm not. I can't even control where I'm going. But I'm quite sure that it's not hot. I cut in front of other shapes, Going towards the light. Now tell me, who am I? While I wait in everlasting night.

Alpha triangle

1 Second vowel
2 tu Brute...
3 Meshed fabric
4 Transmitted
5 Short letters
6 Some musical ensembles
7 Stress

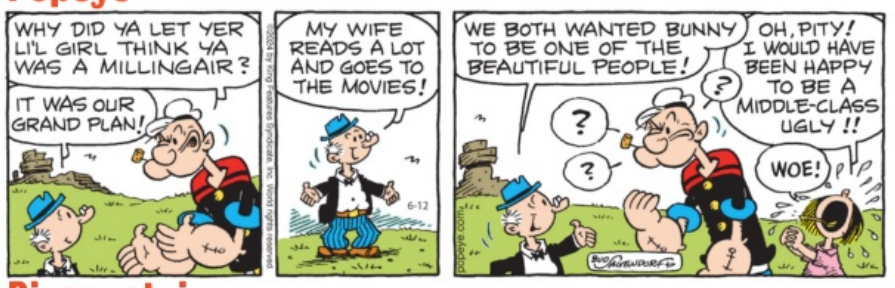


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

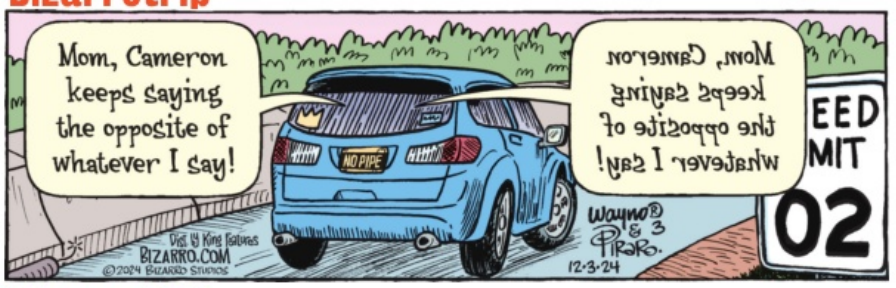
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you will find a balance between your earnings and expenses, strengthening your finances. Your performance at work will likely improve, and your boss may entrust you with new responsibilities, leading to a promotion. You may recover money that was previously stuck. Additionally, you will have control over opponents and hidden enemies.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Past investments may bring smart gains today, helping you achieve your goals with minimal effort and boosting your confidence. However, be mindful of your straightforward nature, as it could impact your relationships with others.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Be cautious with your spending today and avoid unnecessary expenses, as they may affect your savings. Lending money is not advisable. Anxiety could lead to sleeplessness, so try to stay calm while making important decisions. Avoid emotional decision-making and focus on being practical

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Negative energy may surround you today, leading to feelings of unhappiness. Avoid investing in worthless assets, as they may not yield returns. Friends and colleagues may not be as supportive as expected, so try not to rely too much on others. Make independent decisions for the best outcomes.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
You may struggle to express yourself clearly today, leading to a lack of confidence. Trust your intuition when making investment decisions. People around you may not be cooperative with daily tasks. Be mindful of your diet to avoid stomach-related issues.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You will feel excited and receive support from family and friends. Renovation plans or purchasing decorative items may be on your mind, enhancing your social status. Your fixed assets may see growth.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You'll be in a cheerful and romantic mood today. However, if you're experiencing back pain, some exercise will help. Professionally, you may make fruitful plans for the near future. Good news from your children may brighten your day, and students will perform well. Love birds may take important steps toward marriage.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may reconnect with old friends or attend a social gathering. Excitement will be high, and new business innovations may emerge. Unexpected material gains are also possible. Children may bring positive news regarding their studies, and love birds will enjoy quality time together.

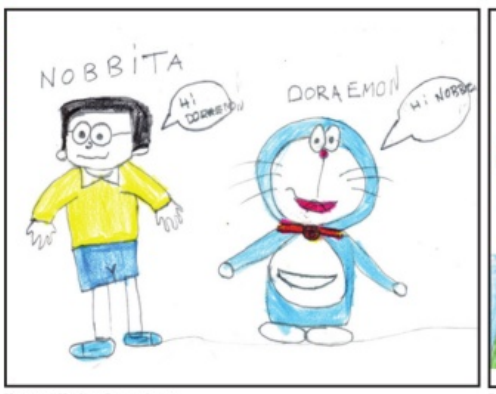
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Your investments are likely to yield good profits, boosting your savings. Small investments may bring significant gains. Your family will support you in maintaining harmony at home. You will be in a strong position against opponents and hidden enemies. A job promotion or career change may enhance your professional stability.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Instant business gains may improve your confidence and bank balance. However, try to manage stress in your domestic life. Positive movement in your work and business will increase your prestige. You may also consider planning an overseas trip.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Students can expect positive results from their studies after thorough research. Singles may find a potential match. Improved understanding with your spouse will bring harmony to your domestic life. Spiritually, you may gain new insights. In business, you might develop new strategies to streamline workflow.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, things may not be in your favour, leading to feelings of dullness and unhappiness. An unexplained fear may trouble you. You could develop an interest in occult subjects. A lack of confidence may impact your work performance, so try to stay positive and focused.

KIDZONE



Kumari Kedia, Bengaluru

Rhea Thomas, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

BULL'S EYE
aping, gasp, LAPSING, lisp, pail, pain, paling, pang, ping, plain, plan, SAPLING, slap, slip, snap, snip, span, spin, spinal

SOLVE IN 1M
= (∛-(64/1000))
= (∛-(4/10)^3))
= -4/10
= -0.4

STRIKE OUT

S	A	S	H	E	S	■	L	O	N	E	L	Y	■	■
E	■	R	■	D	E	B	A	R	■	M	■	L	■	■
R	E	E	F	E	D	■	T	E	N	A	N	T	■	■
B	■	H	■	C	A	E	C	A	■	D	■	A	■	■
A	N	T	S	■	F	L	O	■	S	A	D	E	■	■
S	O	O	T	Y	■	C	■	H	Y	M	E	N	■	■
■	R	■	C	A	L	Y	P	S	O	■	D	■	■	■
S	A	T	E	D	■	C	A	U	D	I	T	■	■	■
T	■	E	A	R	S	H	O	T	■	M	E	R	■	■
A	J	A	R	■	F	U	N	M	O	R	L	D	■	■
I	N	F	E	C	T	■	O	O	D	L	E	S	■	■
H	■	N	■	T	A	B	B	Y	■	A	■	B	■	■
S	C	O	P	E	S	■	A	R	A	B	I	A	■	■

FAST FIVE

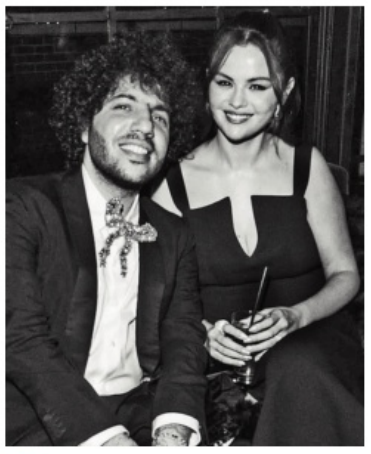
S	C	R	A	M
P	O	I	L	U
R	U	S	E	S
A	P	E	R	T
T	E	N	T	H

QUOTE UNCODE
How we think shows through in how we act. Attitudes are mirrors of the mind. They reflect thinking.

QUICK

C	O	C	C	Y	X	■	I	N	D	E	E	D	■	■
G	■	I	■	Y	■	G	■	L	■	L	■	E	■	■
B	I	A	T	H	L	O	N	■	I	B	I	D	■	■
M	■	O	■	A	■	U	■	A	■	N	■	■	■	■
L	A	W	■	I	C	E	F	L	O	E	■	O	■	■
L	O	■	J	■	A	■	■	L	■	P	■	■	■	■
E	R	R	I	N	G	■	S	T	I	L	L	S	■	■
W	■	C	■	A	■	O	■	■	A	■	E	■	■	■
T	■	E	A	R	S	H	O	T	■	M	E	R	■	■
N	■	R	■	T	■	G	■	W	■	L	■	■	■	■
A	J	A	R	■	F	U	N	M	O	R	L	D	■	■
E	■	C	■	I	■	A	■	L	■	U	■	■

'What I did to deserve you...'



Selena Gomez took to Instagram to share a heartfelt birthday post for her fiance, Benny Blanco.

The singer-actress posted a carousel of pictures showcasing special moments from their relationship, including their vacations, red-carpet appearances, and intimate moments.

Gomez captioned the post, "I'm not sure what I did to deserve you but damn am I glad you were born.. happy birthday baby."

In a recent interview with People magazine, Gomez opened up about her relationship with Blanco, highlighting the importance of feeling valued, seen, and respected.

"My perspective on it, in a simplistic way, is that I actually feel valued. I feel seen. I feel respected. And I think that's all I've ever really wanted," she shared. **–ANI**

Ditch the name-dropping

Nora says she dislikes people using her name as marketing tool

Nora Fatehi is set to entertain audiences with her upcoming film 'Be Happy', co-starring Abhishek Bachchan. In a recent interview with BBC Asian Network, she revealed that some actors hire PR agencies to run campaigns comparing themselves to her after appearing in dance numbers.

She shared that people in the industry think she is arrogant, but she is just straightforward. She also spoke about how she is judged for wanting lead roles in films instead of only doing dance numbers. Adding further, "My logic is that everyone should be allowed to do songs, and everyone should act. But it should be fair for everybody. When I see these songs, you know what I like about them? That girls are coming out, being confident, being sexy, and trying to perform. What I don't like is when everybody starts using my name as a marketing tool."

The dancer-actress revealed that some actors pay PR agencies to use her name to market their songs. She said, "When a new song is released, they compare it to me, saying, 'Nora's career is over' or 'She can eat 100 Noras for breakfast.' I know who is behind this and how much they pay." She also shared that PR agencies often approach her to do the same, but she refuses. "I won't compare myself to anyone or bring someone else down. A song should work because of talent, not because people want to replace someone that's just ridiculous."

While recovering from an ankle injury, Nora Fatehi noticed how PR agencies used her name to promote new songs. She said some were classy, but others were "diabolical and highly degenerate." A clip of her interview was shared on Reddit, sparking speculation about who she was talking about. She will share the screen with Abhishek Bachchan in Remo D'Souza's 'Be Happy'. The film follows a single father who learns to dance to help his daughter achieve her dream of performing in a competition. **–ETimes**

Peak of emotions

Sumukha is excited about the release of his latest movie Manada Kadalu that is scheduled to arrive in theaters on March 28. The movie is bankrolled by E Krishnappa and directed by Yogaraj Bhat. Both of them have joined hands after a gap of 18 years. They are known for the Kannada movie Mungaru Male that broke box office records in Sandalwood.

"I am lucky to have the opportunity to act in this movie directed by Yogaraj Bhat. I learnt a lot from him during the movie's shooting. Our chemistry was good. He used to appreciate and encourage me and his attitude was a motivation for me to give my best during the shooting. I like Yogaraj Bhat's style of writing," said Sumukha.

Sumukha said he auditioned for the film and got selected. "I attended the audition as soon as I received a call from Yogaraj Bhat's office. He told me I have to meet producer E Krishnappa. I did so and Krishnappa was happy and gave the green signal for me to act," Sumukha said.

He said he has been associated with theater in Mumbai for 10 years. "I have also acted in two Kannada movies but I consider Manada Kadalu as the best. It has the potential to connect to all types of audiences because it is fun loving, highly entertaining, highly adventurous and emotional to the peak," he said. The movie also features Rashika Shetty, Anjali Anish, Rangayana Raghu. **– Y Maheswara Reddy**

INTERVIEW **PRAKASH BELAWADI, THEATRE DIRECTOR**

'Theatre people are driven by passion, not money'

Sanjana CS
c-sanjana.s@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

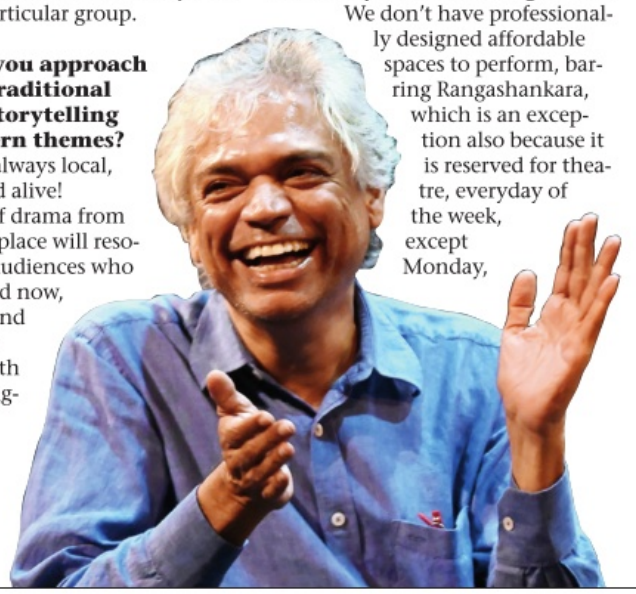
Bengaluru's theatrical heart is beating with renewed vigour, driven by the arrival of Chiguru, a festival dedicated to experimental theatre. Spearheading this artistic movement is acclaimed theatre director Prakash Belawadi, who believes Chiguru will provide a platform for Kannada theatre. In an interview, Belawadi highlights the festival's role in fostering new productions, the challenges of theatre infrastructure, and the future of Kannada theatre in an evolving cultural landscape.

● How important are festivals like Chiguru in providing a platform for Kannada theatre?

Chiguru is a festival of new productions, so: it will enrich the city theatre culture with a bunch of new shows every year; the infrastructure and support provided by Prestige Centre for Performing Arts (PCPA) at its intimate space will encourage groups to boldly experiment with new scripts; and each group will have the same advantages of publicity and marketing, including spillover interest in other plays from audiences loyal to any one particular group.

● How do you approach blending traditional Kannada storytelling with modern themes?

Theatre is always local, present and alive! Conflicts of drama from any age or place will resonate with audiences who are here and now, informed and engaged as they are with the challenges of this time, this place. But any play needs the sensibilities of the performing group to interpret the text in this context.



● What are some of the biggest challenges Kannada theatre faces today, and what solutions do you see for its growth?

We don't have professionally designed affordable spaces to perform, barring Rangashankara, which is an exception also because it is reserved for theatre, everyday of the week, except Monday, which is its day off. But, because of the demand, when a group is lucky enough to get Rangashankara, it can't do more than a couple of days, most times. It has to wait for its turn again to do more shows. So, we need more spaces spread across the city, each within the reach of localities with Kannada speakers, who love to explore new dramatic works. The evening traffic in our city will kill anybody's spirit to seek new experiences.

● Do you think theatre and cinema influence each other or are they evolving independently?

Theatre is independent. Theatre people are driven by passion, not money. So, they are not dependent on producers and distributors, they don't bother about TRPs nor one-line reviews of "super", "first half good, second-half slow" type of instant responses from cinema-goers, nor one 1 to 5 stars from movie reviewers.

● The play that you have directed, " eDabidandi" also translated as Corporate files, explores themes of greed, deceit, and spiritual faith in a corporate setting. What message do you hope the audience takes away from it?

They will see people they know, including themselves, in the play. That is how ordinary experience becomes an aesthetic.

● How do you see the future of Kannada theatre in the next decade? What changes or developments would you like to see?

Developments I already spoke about — more spaces, better infrastructure, affordability. Theatre will survive, anyway. I'm not worried.

(You can catch performances through the next weekend — March 14,15 and 16 will feature, a matinee and evening show of each production.)